

# The Brooksider

Published by Friends of Brookside Gardens, Inc.



**Fall, 2019**

## President's Letter

By Carla Adam, President

We hope you are enjoying a delightful fall. Brookside is lovely this time of year and we hope you have taken the time to stroll through the gardens.

The **Friends of Brookside Gardens (FOBG)** plant sale in September was a huge success and continues to be a great fundraiser for us. This year, the plants were unusually beautiful, the weather cooperated, and many people came to buy plants. **FOBG** netted close to \$20,000 which is a new record. We thank all of you who came out! We also signed up many new members.

This spring, **FOBG** received a very generous \$90,500 gift from the **Milton and Harriet Laitman Trust**. The **Laitman's** named **FOBG** as a beneficiary of their estate. The Trust specifies that the funds be used to "**Establish an Intern Program at Brookside Gardens**". This program should be designed to provide knowledge and experience for college students in the field of horticulture. In the event that such a program is already in place, then said funds should be used to enhance the program. We are very grateful that the **Laitmans** thought of **Brookside Gardens** in their will. Their legacy gift will provide a wonderful opportunity for many summer interns well into the future. Since there has been a summer intern program at

**Brookside** for the past 3 years, this gift will be used to enhance the existing program.

**FOBG** membership expired in October. You should have already received your membership renewal letters in the mail. We hope you will renew your membership. Your continued membership renewals are vital to **FOBG** and **Brookside** and provide about 80% of the **FOBG** funding to support many **Brookside** programs. The remaining roughly 20% is funded with proceeds from our fundraisers and the many generous donations from you and other visitors to **Brookside**. With your support, **FOBG** will provide **Brookside** with \$82,500 this fiscal year to support their projects.

We are still collecting donations for the "**Color Our Future**" campaign to enhance the azalea garden at **Brookside**. Our goal is \$7,000. Thanks to all of you who have contributed.

**FOBG** is hosting a **Membership Meeting** Saturday, November 2 from 10 am until noon. Invitations were mailed with your membership renewals. We hope to see you there.

Enjoy the rest of the fall. Thank you for all that you do to support **FOBG** and **Brookside Gardens**.



Please note that the "News from Brookside" column will return in the Winter 2020 issue of The Brookside.

## *FOBG Plant Sale 2019*

*Photos by Stephanie Oberle*





Joan O'Rourke and Nate Roehrich



Taffy Turner



# Color Our Future!

Since Brookside Gardens first bloomed 50 years ago, azaleas have delighted garden visitors. Starting this year, the Friends of Brookside Gardens hopes to make the azalea garden even more vibrant. You can help **color our future** by donating now. Your donation will help Brookside to add azaleas and companion plants. With your support, the next 50 years at Brookside will be even more colorful!

To help renew and refresh the azaleas at Brookside Gardens, contribute online by visiting [www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org/color-our-future](http://www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org/color-our-future) or mail a donation to:

**Color our Future**  
**Friends of Brookside Gardens**  
**1800 Glenallan Avenue**  
**Wheaton, MD 20902**



*Thank you!*

*A message to our wonderful FOBG volunteers*



Whether you volunteer for one project or throughout the year, we value your time, your strength, your skills and your dedication.

Thank you for making a difference at Brookside and in our community.

*You* make Brookside bloom!

You, too, can be a volunteer! Contact us:  
[friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com)  
301-962-1435 (Leave a message. We will get in touch.)

# Garden Guardian

*By Dr. Dick Hammerschlag, Master Gardener, Howard County*

## Gardening: “Home ‘Groan”

To emphasize the quip: If I learned from all the gardening mistakes I make I’d become a horticultural genius!!! The point of course is that instead of simply groaning and complaining when one of our plant dears goes to plant heaven, we should strive to figure out why, so that the same thing doesn’t happen again on our watch. In this way, we can take a losing venture and turn it into an educational gain. Almost certainly, the most common cause of plant loss is either too much water or not enough. You can’t depend on Mother Nature to do the ‘right’ rain thing to help get our plants established. Overwatering loss is probably due to poor/insufficient drainage and under watering is due to not watering enough. So, how can we tell???

Well simply, when we pull the poor thing out of the ground, take a look at the root ball. Is it bone dry or can you squeeze water out of it like a wet rag?? OK – that represents the extremes, but your case may not be too far from that. Why should such things happen? The answer lies in the way most plants are mass produced for sale. They are grown in an artificial growing medium, let’s call it potting soil, such that a rather delicate, fibrous root system develops. When you place the plant into the ground directly, the following can and almost inevitably will happen. If the soil beneath and around the plant is compact (that is, poorly drained), when a heavy rain occurs the hole fills with water and drowns the root system. By drowning, we mean those tiny little roots suffocate for lack of oxygen. And the soil saturation does not have to last too long (maybe you don’t even notice or expect it), but just think how long you’d last if immersed in water for several minutes!

Or more commonly, you thoughtfully place your plant in nicely loosened up, improved soil and then it

doesn’t rain for a little while. You check the soil around the plant and it seems moist enough. The problem is that the potting mix surrounding the current root system dries out MUCH faster than the surrounding soil and those delicate roots desiccate. Again, maybe you didn’t notice or expect this, but it doesn’t take too long an exposure for this to happen. As proclaimed here, the most common loss of plants occurs before the plants have established – before the planted plant extends roots into the surrounding soil. Even after the plants get established, the same over/under water situations can occur but it takes more extreme weather (or neglect).

So, how do we learn? We find out how we should have handled the planting by benefitting from observation or even reading and diagnosing the cause of failure. One should take the plant to be planted and shake off most of the potting soil it came with. If the root system is somewhat pot bound (has actually been sitting in the potting mix too long before selling), take a knife or saw-edged tool, loosen up the root ball and spread out the roots. Once done, then plant, making sure the roots are moist and then water the plant in to assure the local soil has filled in around the roots and no air gaps remain. And then one must keep the plant watered =keep roots moist (not toooo much water!!!) until the plant has established. With this caring approach you will cut your losses and not have to say ‘Oh no, not another one gone’ (‘groan’) but instead, watch the plant grow!!!!

Yes, you can lose plants for other reasons like pests, diseases, trampling, etc. – but, the water regimen and planting technique takes precedence. So..... **as described above** “Try it, you’ll like it”!!

## WHAT TO DO WITH THE BOUNTY OF THE SUMMER?

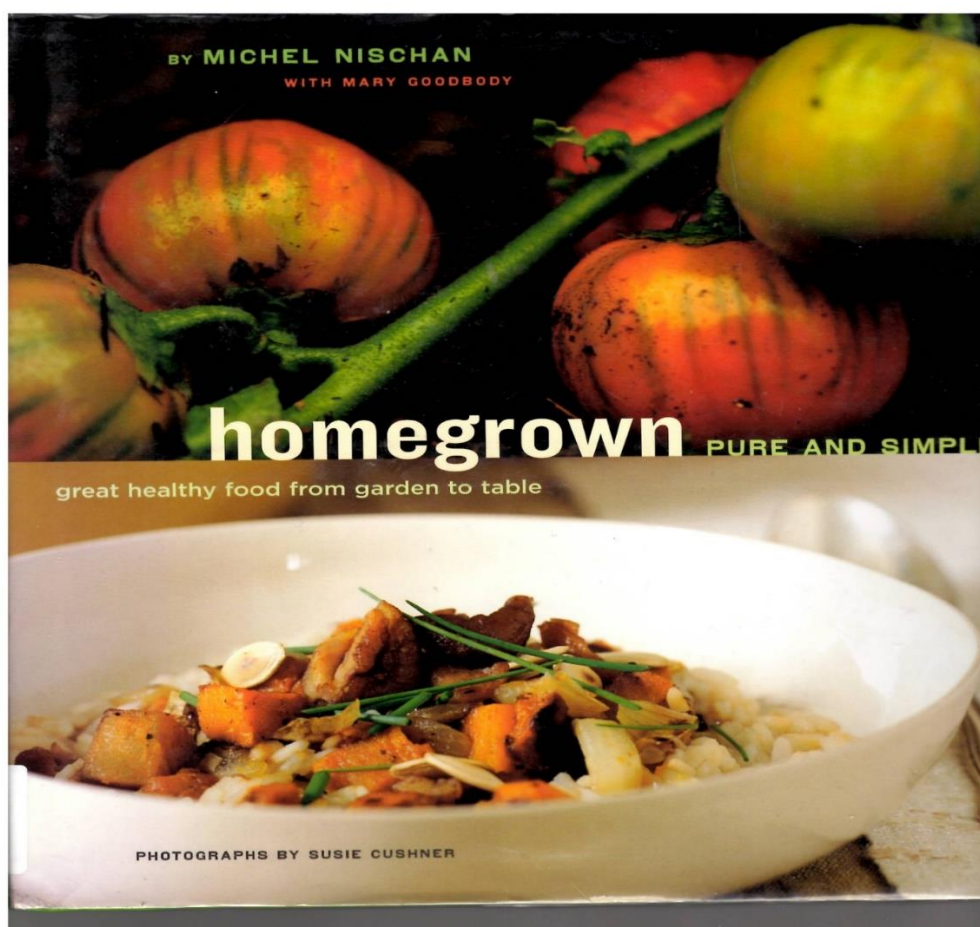
By Joe Ann Stenstrom

You have successfully nurtured those beautiful edible plants. They are flourishing and you need fresh ideas on what to do with the abundance reaped from your labors. Friends and family members are eagerly waiting for your handouts. Your library can help with cookbooks featuring garden to table recipes to brighten your meals and awaken your appetite.

One such book available from Montgomery County Public Libraries is **HOMEGROWN, PURE AND SIMPLE: Great Healthy Food from Garden to Table** by **Michel Nischan** and found in the cookery section at 641.563NIS. "After years of cooking his signature healthful haute cuisine at a variety of upscale restaurants, chef and cookbook author **Michel Nischan** found that he longed for the simple country cooking

his mother had prepared with ingredients straight from the family's backyard garden." Filled with mouth-watering recipes for foods during the summer months, he includes recipes for jams, tangy salads of autumn greens, sugar snap peas with grilled peach dressing, lemon-herb vinaigrette, berry and sweet pea soups, and roasted asparagus. There is a section on preserving that summer goodness for later months with recipes for peach and caramelized onion jam, pickled eggplant, vegetable marmalade, and oven-dried tomatoes.

With holidays approaching, share your bounty with those friends and neighbors who may not want to prepare the foods, but would gladly accept a dish ready to serve and you have the joy of the kitchen, as well as the garden.

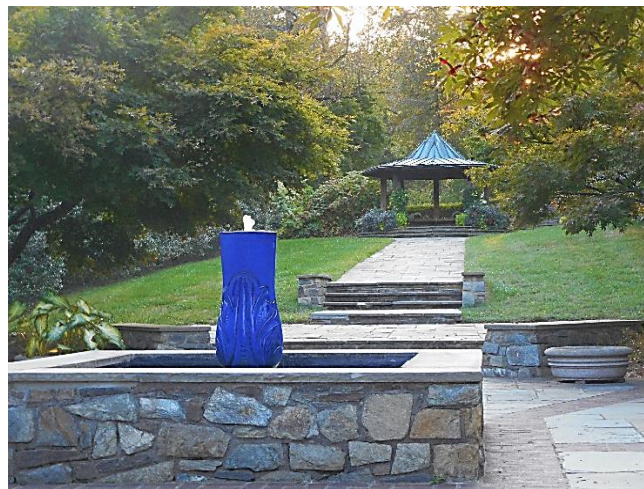


In this and future issues of *The Brooksider*, we will provide a listing of upcoming FOBG sponsored events and Brookside Gardens adult programs. The list will be updated as information becomes available. We hope this will be helpful in planning how you can take advantage of all that Brookside Gardens has to offer. Additional offerings, such as children's programs, art exhibits and excursions can be found at: [Cultivate](#).

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Date	Brookside Gardens Adult and Children's Programs	Course #
11/2/2019	Getting Your Garden Ready for Winter	71582
11/3/2019	Momiji-gari: Japanese Tradition of Autumn Leaf Viewing	71622
11/6/2019	Shinrin-yoku: The Art of Forest Bathing	71548
11/8/2019	Botanical Illumination*	71629
11/10/2019	Healthy Cooking with Seasonal Herbs	71590
11/14/2019	Speaker Series: Native Plants in the Modern Landscape	71956
11/16/2019	Mixed Winter Container	71585
11/26/2019	Thanksgiving Centerpiece	71586
12/10/2019	Festive Fresh Greens: Wreaths	71587
12/11/2019	Festive Fresh Greens: Centerpieces	71588
12/12/2019	Garden After Dark: Holly Daze	71572
12/17/2019	Maymont Mansion & GardenFest of Lights at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden	71635
1/18/2020	Kokedama: The Art of Crafting Living Mossballs	71589
1/28/2020	Brookside Gardens Winter Tour	71579
2/1/2020	Introduction to Plant Propagation - Succulents	71598
2/14/2020	Everything You Wanted to Know About Pruning	71583
2/21/2020	Green Matters: Practical Solutions for Ecologically Sustainable Landscapes	71640

\* Program Meets Multiple Days





*Wishing you a Happy and Healthy  
Holiday Season*

Suggestions? Ideas? Let us know!

**Friends of Brookside Gardens, Inc. Board of Directors**

1800 Glenallan Avenue, Wheaton, MD 20902  
301-962-1435 (voice mail checked daily)

Email address: [friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com)

[Web address: http://www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org/](http://www.friendsofbrooksidegardens.org/)

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